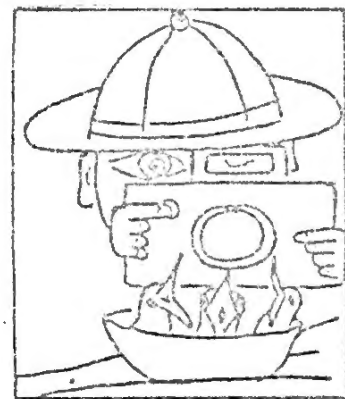


CASTLEMAINE NATURALIST

50

SEPTEMBER 1980



Plants of the Castlemaine District

TINY STAR (*Hypoxis hookeri*, syn *H. pusilla*)

Although small, Tiny Star is conspicuous in the bush during early spring, and is easily recognised with its bright yellow star-like flowers.

Both Tiny Star and Yellow Star (*Hypoxis glabella*) are listed for Kalimna. Tiny Star differs from the much larger Yellow Star in that it has unequal anthers (three short and three long) and has two filament-like leaves on the stem.

The two species can easily be confused and a close examination of local species should be carried out to determine the distribution of each.

The name "Hypoxis" is said to have been given by Linnaeus because the seed case is sharp at the base, hence hypoxis = acid (or sharp).

"hookerii" is in honour of Sir Joseph Hooker, one of the early botanical explorers of Australia, and Director of the Kew Gardens.

Hypoxis differs from the Lilies in that *Hypoxis* has the ovary below the petals



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THE WOOD-WOOD CAMP-OUT

A report of the Western Victorian Field Naturalists' Clubs' Association Camp Out on Aug 16-17th at Wood Wood

Freckled Duck It was reported that one lake had several hundred of these rare ducks; after the duck-shooting the population had been reduced to one. As Freckled Duck tend to circle the area when shooting starts it is no wonder that Freckled Duck is one of the World's rarest species, and included in the Red Data Book.

Despite the detection of many Freckled Duck in the possession of shooters by Fisheries and Wildlife reasearch workers, it was reported that prosecution, or even confiscation of catches, had not taken place.

The Mid-Murray Field Naturalists' Trust have recommended that

- publicity be increased for future duck shoots.
- lakes with significant populations of Freckled Duck be closed to shooting.
- penalties for shooting of Freckled Duck be enforced.
- speed-boat chasing of duck be prevented by adequate policing.

Aluminium Smelter at Portland Portland F.N.C. reported that two sites were under consideration

- cleared land (the present aerodrome, available when the new aerodrome is built elsewhere)
- heathland at Point Danger, containing interesting and rare plants.

Present indications are that the smelter will be built on the heath-land, and so destroying this unique wet coastal heathland. Central to the discussion is the direction of the prevailing wind. Apparently both could adversely affect the township but that the aerodrome site is much better.

Individuals and individual clubs were asked to support the "Save the Heathland Movement".

Future Camp-outs

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| - Oct 11 and 12 1980 | Maryborough (Annual Meeting) |
| - <u>March-April 1981</u> | Castlemaine ?? |
| - <u>August 1981</u> | to be decided |
| - <u>October 1981</u> | Donald |
| - <u>October 1982</u> | Creswick |

Beauglehole Fund Commission of \$500 has been received from the Wild-life Safaris.

The "Victorian Vascular Plant Check List" will be launched at the camp-out at Maryborough in October, and the Alpine List early in 1981.

Kangaroo Shooting The Mid-Murray Field Naturalists' Trust has written to the Australian Conservation Foundation asking that it reverse the opposition to export of Kangaroo products. At present, kangaroos are in plague proportions in N.S.W. and carcasses are being left to rot. The A.C.F. is however, still opposed to commercial shooting, and prefers that shooting be done by government shooters.

The Camp-out This was a most enjoyable and well run campout. Organiser was the Mid-Murray Field Naturalists' Trust, centred at Nyah. Most of those at the camp-out saw the Spotless Crake; and also the Purple-backed Wren and the White-Winged Wren. As well, a select few saw the Barking Owl. Plants of special interest were several species of Samphire Glasswort, the Hard-leaf Wattle, the River Bluebell and a specimen of the very rare Cactus Bossiaea.

E.P.

Indian Turtle Doves

How common are these birds in Castlemaine ?

I had not seen any here until this week, but yesterday I heard one calling, and today it was feeding in the yard.

E.P. 25/8/80

Indian Mynahs

How close do they come to Castlemaine ?

When travelling to Melbourne I usually watch for the first appearance of Mynahs, and have been wondering whether they are extending their range further North. So far I have not seen them much North of Gisborne. Next time you go to Melbourne and see them, note the next mile post you come to. (Or, if you prefer, Kilometre post).

G.B. 29/8/80

NOTES FROM THE PAST

by Ray Bradfield

THE DINGO

Now that the Dingo has been almost extinguished on the stations around Deniliquin, we begin to discover that although he was a nuisance, and that he destroyed numbers of sheep, still he was of some use.

Since his disappearance, tens of thousands of wallabies, paddymelons, kangaroo rats, and other animals of the bush have shown their faces and are becoming a nuisance. The Dingo was once a terror to these creatures - he used to watch them and by his strategy pounce on them without mercy as his legitimate prey. The settlers will have to take some steps to get rid of them, and it is strange that the sportsmen of Deniliquin do not now and then, go out and have some sport.

(from the files of the "Federal Standard" , Feb 1863)

CASTLEMACHINE FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB PROGRAM

Meetings

Friday Sept. 12.

Speaker : Mr Ken Holden

Subject: Photographing nesting birds.

Friday Oct. 10

Speaker: Mr T Harrap of Ballarat C.A.B.

Subject : The Loss of Rain Forest.

Outings (Continued).

Nov 15-16

Campout and hike to Mitchell Plateau in Grampians. This will be comparatively strenuous. An alternative activity is under investigation for those who do not fancy the hike.

Sunday Nov. 2 Castlemaine State Festival

As difficulties were encountered in hiring a bus, there will be a car tour of the Muckleford and Maldon forest, to which visitors to C'maine are warmly invited. The tour will depart from the Railway station area at 2 p.m. Bring afternoon tea.

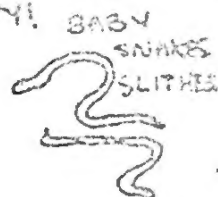
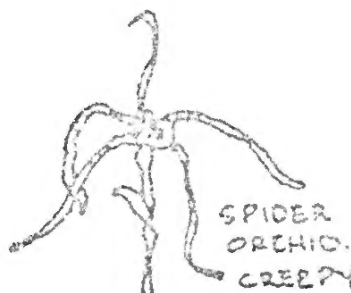
Wednesday Sept 17

An afternoon trip to view the Baeckea at Glenluce. Depart Ed. Centre at 4.15 p.m.

Thursday November 27

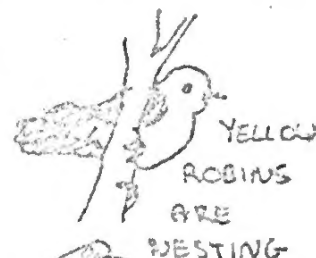
Natural Resources League tour of Castlemaine and Maldon as part of conference on the decline of trees in the landscape. Concern is expressed at the lack of regeneration of species due in part to grazing and cropping. Effects may include loss of shelter for stock, loss of soil, and increased salinity due to a rise in the water table. Members of the Castlemaine Naturalists Club may join the tour at C'mm.

Details are :-	10.30	Arrive C'maine - toilet stop
	11.00	Arrive Maldon - Baringhup area.
		Inspect shelter belts, lunch.
	2.00	Newstead - Yandoit
	3.45	Depart Daylesford



What to look for in

SEPTEMBER



Outings

Saturday, Sept 13.

A stroll through the bush at Chewton.

Leader: C. Sitch.

Meet at Ed. Centre at 1.30

Monday, Sept 22.

Annual C'maine Show Day Holiday long march.

From Green Gully bridge to the Goldfields Nursery at Muckleford.

Distance; 5 miles, give or take a mile or two to allow for diversions.

Meet at Ed Centre at 9.00 a.m. or at Green Gully at 9.15 a.m.

Saturday, Oct. 4.

Maldon Railway walk.